

## **Introduction**

The International Standards Organization will soon publish its' travel risk standard (ISO 31030) that compliments the ISO 31000 Risk Management Standard.

The development of the Travel Risk Management Standard is designed to help organizations manage the challenges faced with the fast-changing and diverse risk and threat landscape that surrounds business travellers. Organizations should be planning for these risks and ensure that when people are traveling for business it is meeting the expectations of its' duty of care.

Security threats from opportunistic petty crime are commonplace, but you might be exposed to more to more serious crime (kidnapping and ransom). Other security related risks such as terrorism, cybercrime and activism may need to be considered. Risks associated with health and safety are also common, and potentially include infectious diseases, local viruses, and poor local hygiene conditions. Today the Covid-19 pandemic requires new health security considerations. Accidents and disruption are always possible when travelling, and the chances of this happening increase tremendously when there is extreme weather, such as flooding, snow/ice and wild fires. Serious incidents can develop from a simple fall or equipment failing (such as sudden technical escalator or elevator events). Making sure Cyber Risk is covered while travelling has become a top priority too, and is often overlooked.

Experts across the sector understand the problems and recognise the scope of the challenge. Over time, they have developed good practices that help address the issues and demonstrate that the duty of care is being met or exceeded.

## **ISO 31030**

In early 2018, the BSI submitted a proposal to the ISO Technical committee for a standard based on the UK PAS (BS 3001) to help organizations managing travel risks. This was approved by TC262 in July 2018

The scope for the standard was to provide international good practice guidance to organizations on how to manage risk associated with business travel and address all aspects of the travel management process. The standard provides additional guidance specifically for Travel Risk and helps build on the framework provided by ISO 31000:2018 for Risk Management, one of the worlds leading management standards. For organizations and its' people, Travel Risks can have consequences in terms of economic performance, litigation and professional reputation, as well as environmental, safety and societal outcomes.

The guidance, that is suitable for all sizes and types of organizations, helps you identify, assess and manage risks proactively to improve the overall safety of personnel and the performance of the organization. The guidance can be used 'stand-alone' or as part of a Management System to improve the management of travel risk around the world and to support the needs of all internal and external stakeholders.

ISO, based in Geneva, is the body responsible for many of the world's most important product and management systems standards. It is made up of over 160 National Standards Bodies that work together to share knowledge and build '*consensus-based, market relevant International Standards that provide solutions to global challenges*'. The technical committee for Risk Management is TC262 and Working Group 7 is responsible for ISO 31030.

The UK is a prominent member of ISO and is represented by the British Standards Institute (BSI). The mirror committee to TC262 is RM/1 that works with a diverse range of organizations, academics and subject matter experts.

## **Abstract**

Effectively managing risks for an organization is crucial to success. In the field of Travel Risk the challenges range from day to day events that can impact on performance, through to crises that can threaten life.

Risk to people working around the world for their organizations is complex, and many organizations have struggled to understand and balance what capabilities they need and what is appropriate for their people and business.

This paper introduces new guidance from the International Standards Organization (ISO) providing a framework developed by experienced international experts to help meet the 'duty of care' expected, and deliver cost effective travel risk management.

ISO 31030 encourages organizations to establish, implement, maintain and continually improve their travel risk management framework, policies, procedures and practices. **The relationship between ISO 31030 and 31000 enables improved integration of good practice travel risk management and activities within the organization's broader risk management framework and systems.**

### *Duty of Care*

*'a moral responsibility or legal obligation of the organization to protect the traveller from threats and risks'.*

The standard stresses the importance of an organization having a clear understanding of the factors that may affect or influence its travel risk management programme objectives.

#### **Travel Risk Factors & Activities**

Accommodation Selection

Benchmarking

Close Protection

Communication &

Consultation

Competency

Evaluation

Implementation

Incident Management

Information Security

Advice & Education

Kidnap & Ransom

Leadership Commitment

Medical

Objectives

Planning

Policy & Law

Risk Assessment

Risk Avoidance

Risk Identification

Risk Reduction

Risk Transfer

Risk Treatment

Roles & Responsibilities

Security Support Services

Tracking & Evacuation

Training & Development

Transportation

Programme Management

These factors will, to a greater or lesser extent, need to be understood in relation to the internal context of the organization and those external to it.

Recognising the context of a risk is critical to being able to manage the uncertainty effectively. Context supports your decision-making and helps ensure the measures being taken are appropriate and effective.

The internal context would usually be expected to cover:

- Organizational strategy, policy, plans, regulations & objectives
- An organization's general culture & travel risk management culture
- Risk appetite
- Risk management strategy and risk criteria
- Traveller competences (experience and skills)
- A Traveller and Group profile (for multiple travellers)  
(to identify any needs due to nationality, cultural identity, gender, orientation, religion, age, occupation, position, disability or medical history which can all affect the risks associated with the travel)
- Travellers' interest, knowledge, & travel risk management awareness
- Minors for whom the traveller or organization is responsible
- Resources & tools needed to manage organizational travel risk
- Risk management and travel risk management scope.

The external context can include, but is not limited to:

- International, regional and national political, legal & regulatory factors
- Social and cultural factors,
- Terrorism, insurgency & war
- Social unrest (including sectarian, communal and ethnic violence)
- Violence & petty crime
- Quality, availability and reliability of the proposed transport
- Quality, availability and reliability of telecommunications
- State of industrial relations
- Effectiveness of the security and emergency services
- Risk of natural disasters
- Potential health threats and standards of medical care
- Pandemic and epidemics
- Information & cyber security threats

ISO 31030 has the flexibility needed to cope with differences in size and scope of organizations and the different environments in which they have to operate. Guidance is provided on how to apply the standard proportionately. Clearly a global oil company will have different challenges, risks, responsibilities and requirements to a company involved in medical supplies in Europe. The risk framework provided helps identify the priorities based on business objectives and helps manage and deliver the necessary planning.

Managing travel risk needs to be personal to the traveller and organization, and undertaken on a case by case basis. However, adopting good practice means that it will become much easier to include all formal business trips into the risk assessment process, improving the travel experience and meeting the duty of care.

### **The Accommodation problem**

Some aspects of business travel have regulatory or quality regimes (e.g. aviation, rail transportation etc,) that help tremendously when assessing risk, but there is a problem when selecting accommodation. There are no consistent global standards for accommodation safety and security.

Hotels are inherently vulnerable to criminals and terrorists alike. Crime analysis in many countries cites that hotels are perceived as 'soft' targets, rich in opportunity to target people or their possessions.

The 'public' nature of hotel buildings, where guests and other legitimate visitors come and go freely, provides the opportunity for attackers to enter the building to exploit opportunities for crime or terrorist acts. The hotel sector has also become a target for cyber-criminals with cyber-attacks increasing significantly. There is real economic and public interest behind these attacks and uncertainty about the level of unknown attacks. This makes hotel security difficult for travellers and travel risk managers to assess, as the industry culture places an emphasis on comfort, facilities, service and other attributes of guest comfort - and doesn't necessarily prioritise security. Whilst many hotels do take security seriously and have good policies, staff and systems, it is a fact that security capabilities in hotels vary enormously and are often 'self-assessing', if assessed at all. The existing 'self-certification' model is seen as lacking objectivity, independence and rigour in today's environment of complex risks and threats and a more a litigious response to perceived failures.

Some travellers and travel risk managers expect a brand or a high star rating to correlate to at least better security, but there is no evidence that this is reliable, particularly where local implementation is by independently owned or franchised hotels. The lack of a consistent standard that provides appropriate and proportional capabilities has exposed travellers, operators and organizations to additional risks that need to be recognised and addressed. This situation also makes it very difficult for the Travel Risk Managers and their organizations to meet the legal expectations around their 'Duty of Care' and hotels need to respond.

With the advent of the International Standard ISO 31030, an opportunity is presented to not only improve the management of travel risk, but for accommodation providers to positively differentiate themselves in a very competitive market by providing independent assurance of implementation and maintenance of security and health security standards.

### **Independent Security Assurance**

ISO 31030 Travel Risk Management Standard is likely to encourage travel risk managers to adopt consistent systems of evidence-based validation, developed with input from their own internal security department, and/or more robustly independent providers of capabilities and assurance.

An ISO standard that encourages this approach could in turn encourage expert security accreditation and assurance providers into the market. In an accreditation or certification scheme, a hotel would be assessed by a validating organization against a published standard to determine if they meet, or exceed, the standard. Successful accreditation would reassure corporate clients and could be used to add value for the hotel generally. If there were a problem meeting the standard the hotel would have action plan to address

### **Risk Reduction**

Organizations should consider the following risk reduction activities:

- Active management of travel safety, health and security
- Travel route & destination risks
- Accommodation safety & security
- Travel itinerary & duration
- Traveller profile
- Relevant geopolitical circumstances
- Relevant government/regulatory advice
- Expert advisory

the areas of weakness before re-seeking accreditation or certification, that in turn ensures any changes or investment needed is effective and cost justified.

Successful certification or accreditation will enable the hotel to market its security qualifications accordingly.

A good example of this working in practice is the 'Global Secure' accreditation, that includes the provision to the hotel of a detailed security accreditation assessment report, which the hotel can provide to corporate and other clients as part of the assurance process.

Hotels are already regulated in respect of health & safety, fire protection and food hygiene and the new ISO standard will be a catalyst for the quality of security to meet good practice standards too.

### **Benefits to Hotels and Travel Risk Management**

- Cost effective development and adoption of consistent and transparent security standards
- Introduction of credible, recognised and independent accreditation or certification systems which are compliant with ISO 31030
- ISO 31030 will help create a 'level playing field' by encouraging more transparency and scrutiny of security standards and reducing the risk of security being compromised due to competitive pressures.
- Reduction in the costs of assessing hotel security standards
- Annual re-accreditation maintains on-going duty of care commitments and supports continual improvement in security
- Accreditation builds business for hotels and simplifies the validation process for corporate clients
- Builds confidence and brand loyalty in independent travellers through greater security assurance
- Supports internal governance and risk management processes
- Generates reports and other assets that hotels can use as marketing tools to provide assurance to potential clients
- Great reputational protection and defence against litigation in the event of a serious security incident

### **Safer Travel**

The introduction of the 'Travel Risk Management' standard is long overdue. Travel risk is real, and represents a major risk for many employees and their employers.

The risks and threats are complex and dynamic, and their management can be very challenging. Every year, there are tragic consequences rooted in poor assessment and failure to manage processes. Whilst the risks and threats cannot all be eliminated; they can be minimised and mitigated by adopting tried and tested risk management and mitigation processes.

The ISO standards development process has assembled considerable expertise at a global level to consider these threats and risks, and to identify the best management and mitigation practices to help make travel a safer endeavour. ISO 31030 will doubtless evolve over time, but the release later this year will be a major step forward for the travel management world in raising the standard and consistency of approach.

The question that needs to be answered is: "Will you seize the opportunity to address the threats we all face, or miss it and potentially suffer the consequences?"